

# FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

A STORY OF PURPOSE, WINGS, AND BELIEF



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PRESIDENT, WOMEN IN AVIATION INDIA

Mahatma Gandhi once said,  
*“If you educate a man, you educate an individual.  
But if you educate a woman, you educate an entire family.”*

It was an August afternoon in New Delhi. Over a simple lunch, I found myself in quiet conversation with Ms. CJ Collins. Our exchange drifted beyond careers and milestones, into reflections on purpose, legacy, and the quiet, often unseen strength of women in aviation.

Having spent over four decades in aviation and hospitality, I had witnessed these women—resilient, capable, and dedicated—working tirelessly behind the scenes, often unacknowledged. That afternoon lit a spark. It was time to shift the narrative.

We envisioned not just a platform, but a movement. A voice that would honour, empower, and uplift women across India's aviation sector. To form a registered society, we needed ten founding members. We reached out to fifteen women from various verticals of the aviation industry. Every single one said yes.

The Women in Aviation India Chapter was born. The Registrar granted us approval as a non-profit organization dedicated to advancing the role of women in aviation.

My heartfelt thanks to our founding members—**Kiran Jain, CJ Collins, Ranjana Kaul, Neelam Rudy, Neelam Mathews, Ambalika Saikia, Capt. Preeti Siddharth Singh, Sudha Palit, Dr. Shefali Juneja, Tulsi Mirchandaney, Capt. Shweta Singh, Kumkum Bhatia, Neetu Gaura, and Noopurr R. Chablani.** You believed in this vision before it even had a name.

## A DATE THAT TOOK FLIGHT



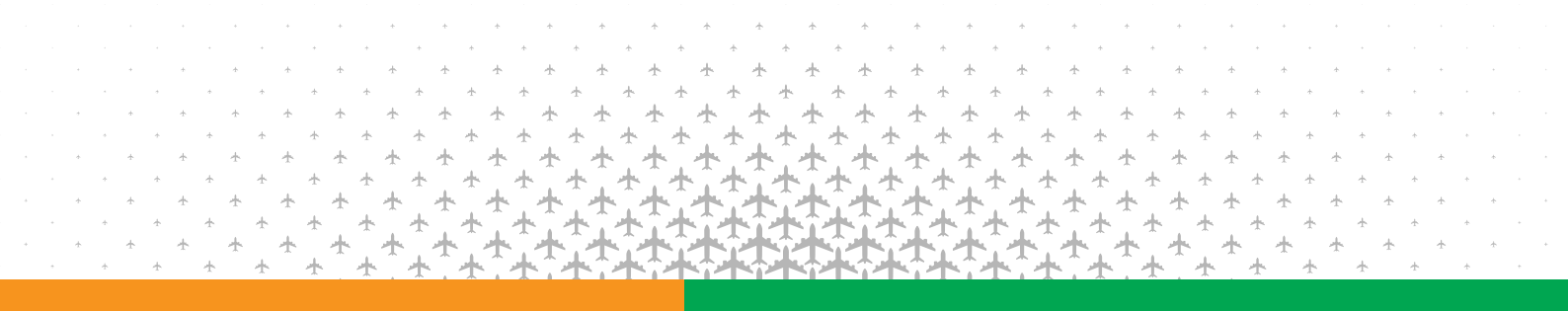
On **7th December 2015**, Women in Aviation India was formally launched—an inspiring milestone that beautifully aligned with **International Civil Aviation Day**. This moment was made possible through the visionary support of **Shri R.N. Choubey, then Secretary, Ministry of Civil Aviation**, whose unwavering guidance laid the foundation for our journey.

We were also honoured by the gracious presence of **Mr. Richard Verma, then U.S. Ambassador to India**, adding international goodwill to this significant occasion.

## OUR IDENTITY – #SHESOARSTHESKY



We set out to create a logo that would not merely represent us, but embody every effort, every aspiration behind our movement. At its core lies the bindi—a powerful symbol of Indian womanhood—encircled by the hues of the national tricolor. Saffron, white, and green come together to represent courage, peace, and progress. Thoughtfully conceptualized and brought to life by Lalit Mohan Sharma and his creative team, the logo is not just a design—it is a living emblem of our mission and values.



## OUR SLOGAN

Inspired by the visionary call of **Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi ji** —“**Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao**”—we set out to amplify our mission with a voice that could resonate across the nation.

By 2017, our identity found powerful expression in the form of a slogan that captured the spirit of every aspiring girl and every empowered woman: “**Beti Ki Udaan, Desh Ka Swabhimaan.**”

बेटी के उड़ान, देश का स्वाभिमान

This stirring call was officially unveiled on **8th March 2017, International Women's Day**, by **Shri Ashok Gajapathi Raju**, then **Hon'ble Union Minister of Civil Aviation**, at **Rajiv Gandhi Bhawan, New Delhi**.

More than words, it became a movement—an anthem for every girl who dares to dream, and every woman who rises with courage. With the unwavering support of the Ministry of Civil Aviation, this message took flight—igniting hearts, inspiring change, and redefining the skies for generations to come.

## THE SONG OF OUR SKIES

Soon after, our anthem was born:

**“Chhoo Lengi Aasmaan... Bharat ki Betiyan.”**

Penned by our founding member **Smt. Renu Hussain**, composed and sung by **Shri Krishna Beuria** who was introduced by **Smt. Usha Padhee, IAS**, then Joint Secretary, MoCA—this anthem carried a soaring promise to every daughter of India: The sky belongs to you.

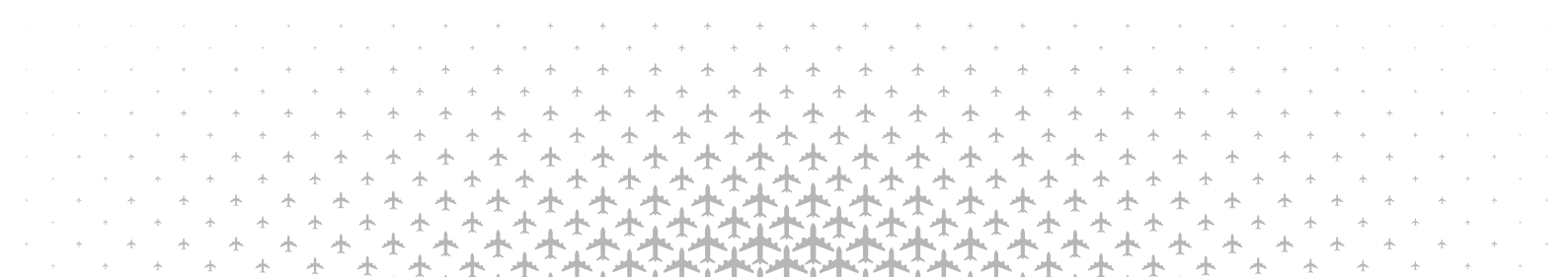
It was formally launched at the **WAI Awards 2023 – Giving Wings to Dreams**, by **Gen. (Dr.) V.K. Singh (Retd.)**, then **Hon'ble Union Minister of State for Civil Aviation**. The melody still echoes. The message is louder than ever.

## OUR KEY MILESTONES

Every movement begins with a spark—an idea rooted in purpose and nurtured by people who believe in its power.

For Women in Aviation India, 2018 was that turning point—a year that breathed life into our dreams and shaped the course of our journey.

We remain deeply grateful to **Shri Suresh Prabhu**, then **Hon'ble Minister of Civil Aviation**, whose unwavering encouragement gave us the confidence to take flight. Alongside him, two trailblazing women—**Dr. Najma Heptulla**, **former Governor of Manipur** and Guest of Honour at our Girls in Aviation Day (GIAD) event in Imphal, and **Lt. Dr. Mridula Sinha**, **Goa's first woman Governor**—stood firmly by our side. Their presence and belief in our cause helped set the tone for what Women in Aviation India would become—a platform for purpose, empowerment, and transformation.



## CELEBRATING THE SHEROES OF INDIAN AVIATION – “WINGS TO DREAMS” AWARDS



The year 2022 marked a landmark moment with the launch of the “Wings to Dreams” Awards—our tribute to the remarkable women shaping India’s aviation landscape. In partnership with **FICCI**, this initiative began as a recognition platform and has since evolved into a national celebration of courage, leadership, and resilience.

We were honored to have **Shri Jyotiraditya M. Scindia, Hon’ble Minister of Civil Aviation, as the Chief Guest**. His presence was more than symbolic—it reinforced the significance of acknowledging women’s impact in aviation.

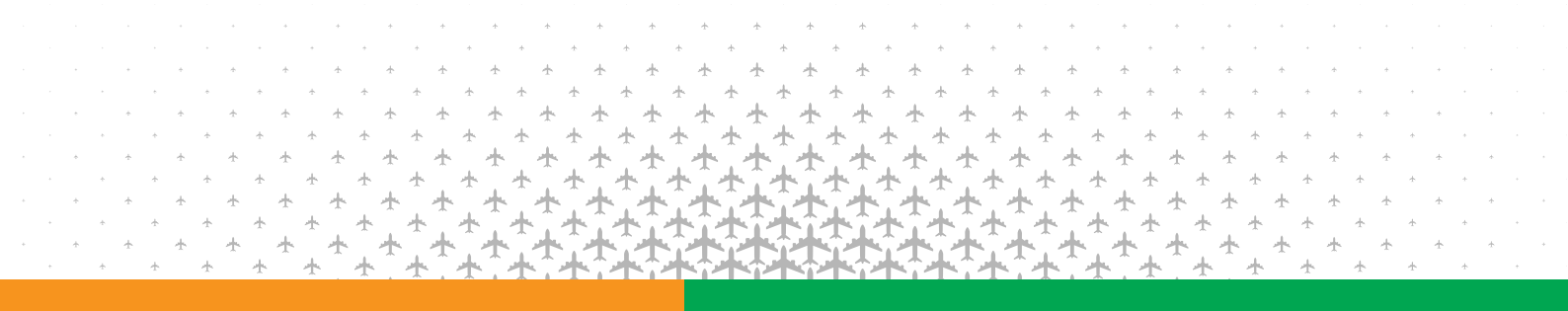
“**Dwelling on the achievement of women in the sector, Shri Jyotiraditya M. Scindia, Union Minister of Civil Aviation said** “This is a landmark day to be remembered. The success of women in aviation is not confined to airports or airplanes but to a much larger ecosystem. 15% of our

pilots in India are women which is 3 times more than the global average. But this 15% is not good enough as women have surpassed various odds and stereotypes and I firmly believe there must come a day in India that this 15% must reach 50% of our pilot strength in our country. For this to achieve, we must start from having easy access to STEM education to our young girls in their early education”.

Our sincere gratitude to the esteemed **Jury Panel** whose expertise and thoughtful deliberations have elevated the stature of these awards over the years. We thank **Smt. Rathi Viney Jha, Shri Pradeep Kharola, Shri Kapil Kaul, Shri Marcel Hungerbuehler, Shri Ashwani Lohani, Admiral RK Dhowan, Shri Gurjit Gill, Shri Vivek Atray, and Smt. Anuradha Mathur** for their invaluable contributions.

## STRATEGIC ALLIANCES OVER THE YEARS – GIRLS IN AVIATION DAY

With the steadfast support of the Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship and through strategic outreach across National Skill Training Institutes (NSTIs) and industry partners like CII, we have extended our footprint far beyond metropolitan cities. From the easternmost corners to the western frontiers, and from the northern heights to the southern coasts, our efforts have reached young aspirants across tier 2 and tier 3 cities. Together, we have made aviation not just a distant dream—but an achievable reality for girls across India.



## WITH GRATITUDE IN EVERY ALTITUDE

### No journey takes flight alone.

Every milestone we've reached has been made possible by the steadfast support of those who believed in our vision from the very beginning.

We extend our deepest gratitude to the **Ministry of Civil Aviation, Government of India**—the true wind beneath our wings. Your unwavering encouragement has been the cornerstone of our mission to honour, uplift, and empower women in aviation.

With sincere respect, we offer special thanks to: **Shri Kinjarapu Ram Mohan Naidu**, Hon'ble Minister of Civil Aviation; **Shri Vumlunmang Vualnam, IAS**, Secretary, MoCA, **Smt. Rubina Ali**, Joint Secretary, MoCA; **Shri Vipin Kumar**, Chairman; **Shri Rajiv Pratap Rudy**, former MoS, **Civil Aviation**; **Shri Rajiv Bansal, IAS**, former Secretary, MoCA; **Mr. Amber Dubey**, former Joint Secretary, Ministry of Civil Aviation; **Shri Sanjiv Jindal**, former Executive Director, Airports Authority of India.

Your continued support and leadership have helped elevate our vision, empowering the aviation ecosystem to soar higher and celebrate excellence at every altitude.

## PARTNERS WHO WALKED WITH US

Thank you for believing in the dream and journeying with us: **Ministry of Civil Aviation, Ministry of Skills Development and Entrepreneurship -NSTI, Airports Authority of India, Air India, AirAsia, Amadeus, BAIL, Bird Academy, Bird Airport Services, BFS, Blue Dart, CIAL, CII, FICCI, GMR, IATA, Kempegowda International Airport Bengaluru, KPMG, Lockheed Martin, Millennium, Make MyTrip, Pawan Hans, Roseate Hotels & Resorts.**

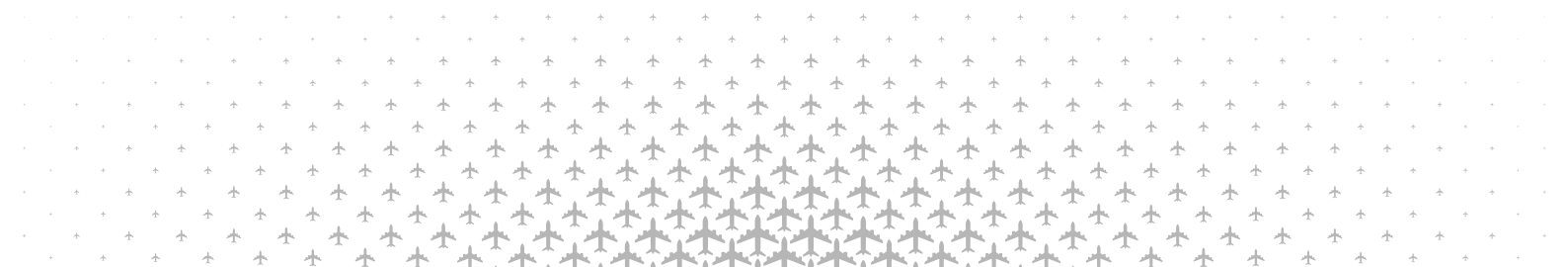
## YEARS OF FLIGHT—AND STILL RISING



From one quiet lunch to a nationwide movement—we have grown into a thriving collective of mentors, dreamers, role models, and change-makers.

A defining moment was our invitation to **Rashtrapati Bhavan**—where our members met the **Hon'ble President of India, Smt. Droupadi Murmu ji**—in recognition of women achievers in Indian aviation.

As we approach a decade of flight, we look back with pride and ahead with purpose **over 60,000 girls** inspired directly and indirectly, lives uplifted, barriers broken, and horizons redefined.





## THIS IS MORE THAN AN ORGANISATION

It is a movement—born from belief, shaped by purpose, and carried forward by the unyielding strength of women determined to rise.

To every member of the Women in Aviation India family—you are the wind beneath our wings. Your dedication, passion, and quiet resilience have helped us soar beyond boundaries and dream beyond limits.

To those who are newly joining us—welcome aboard. May your journey be one of meaning and momentum, guided by courage and fuelled by dreams as vast as the skies we seek to conquer.

Together, let us chart new horizons—undaunted, united, and unstoppable.

“यत्र नार्य नभः स्पृशन्ति तत्र देवा समागताः ।  
तत्र भवित समृद्धिः तत्र भवित नूतनं युगम् ॥”

**Where women rise to touch the sky, the divine is present.  
There, prosperity blooms— and a new age begins.**

